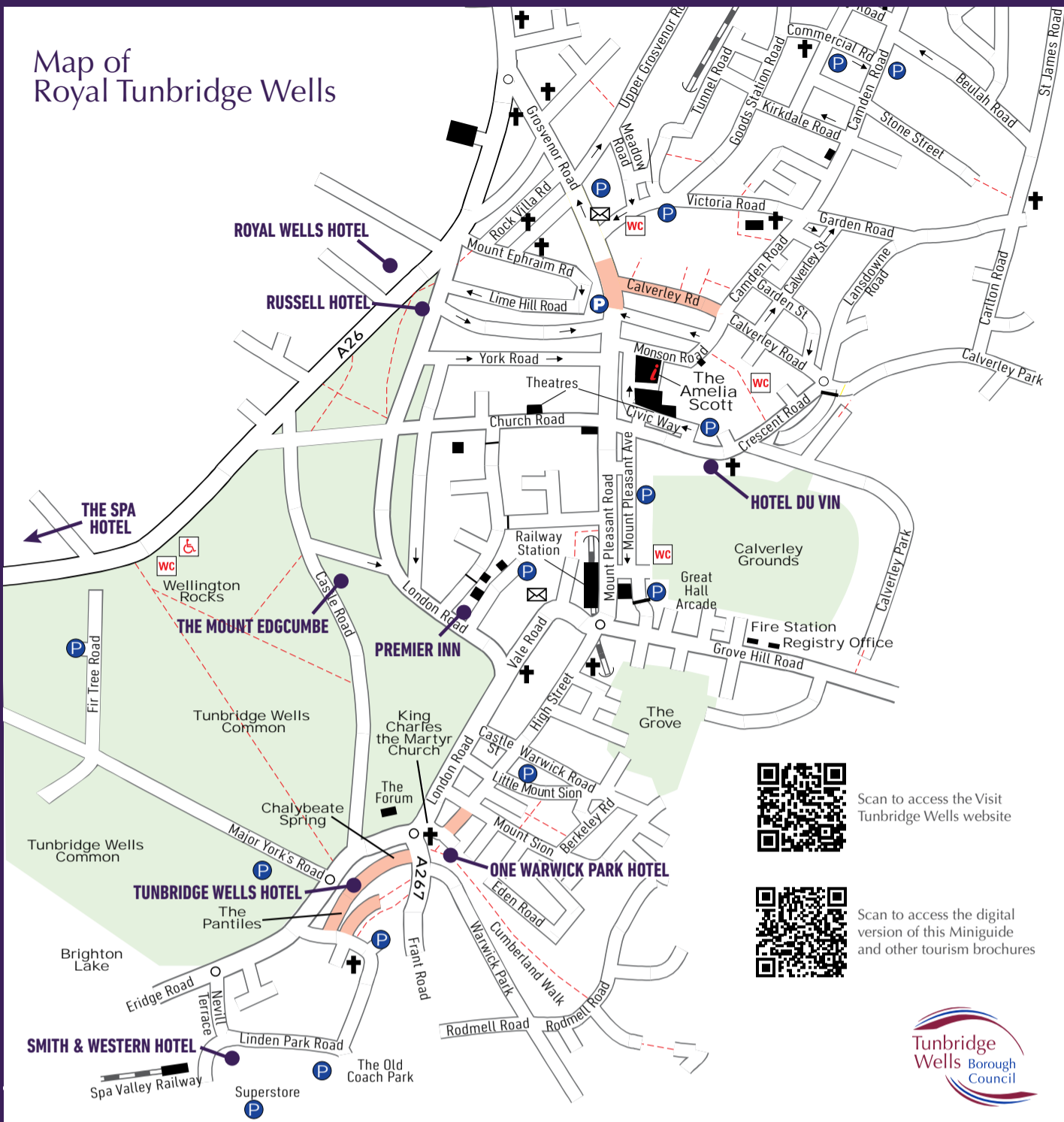


# Map of Royal Tunbridge Wells



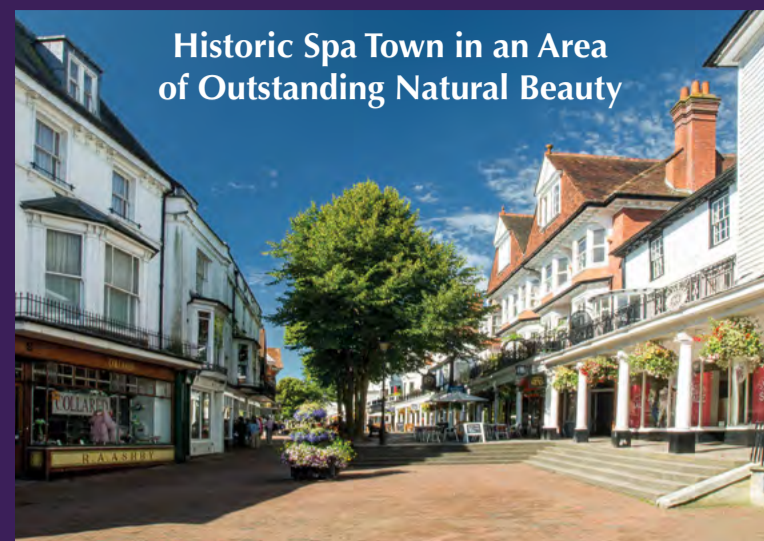
Scan to access the Visit Tunbridge Wells website



Scan to access the digital version of this Miniguide and other tourism brochures

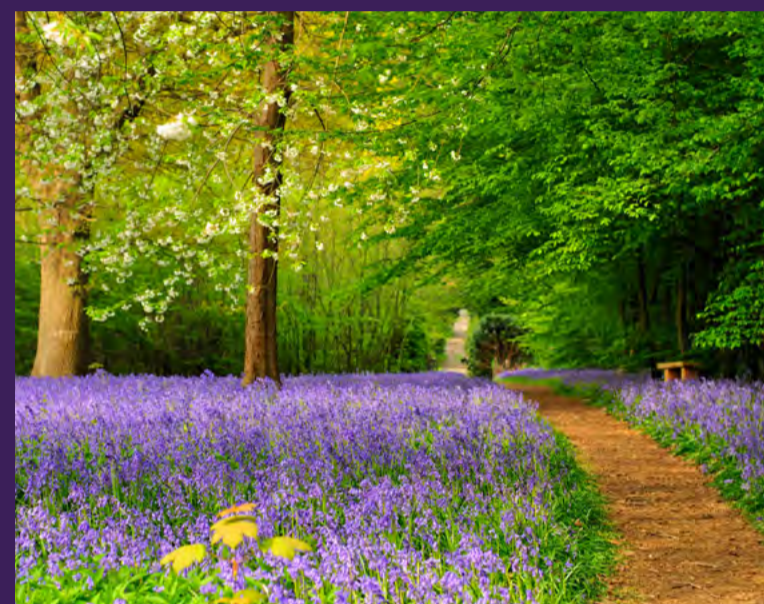


# Visit tunbridgewells



Historic Spa Town in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

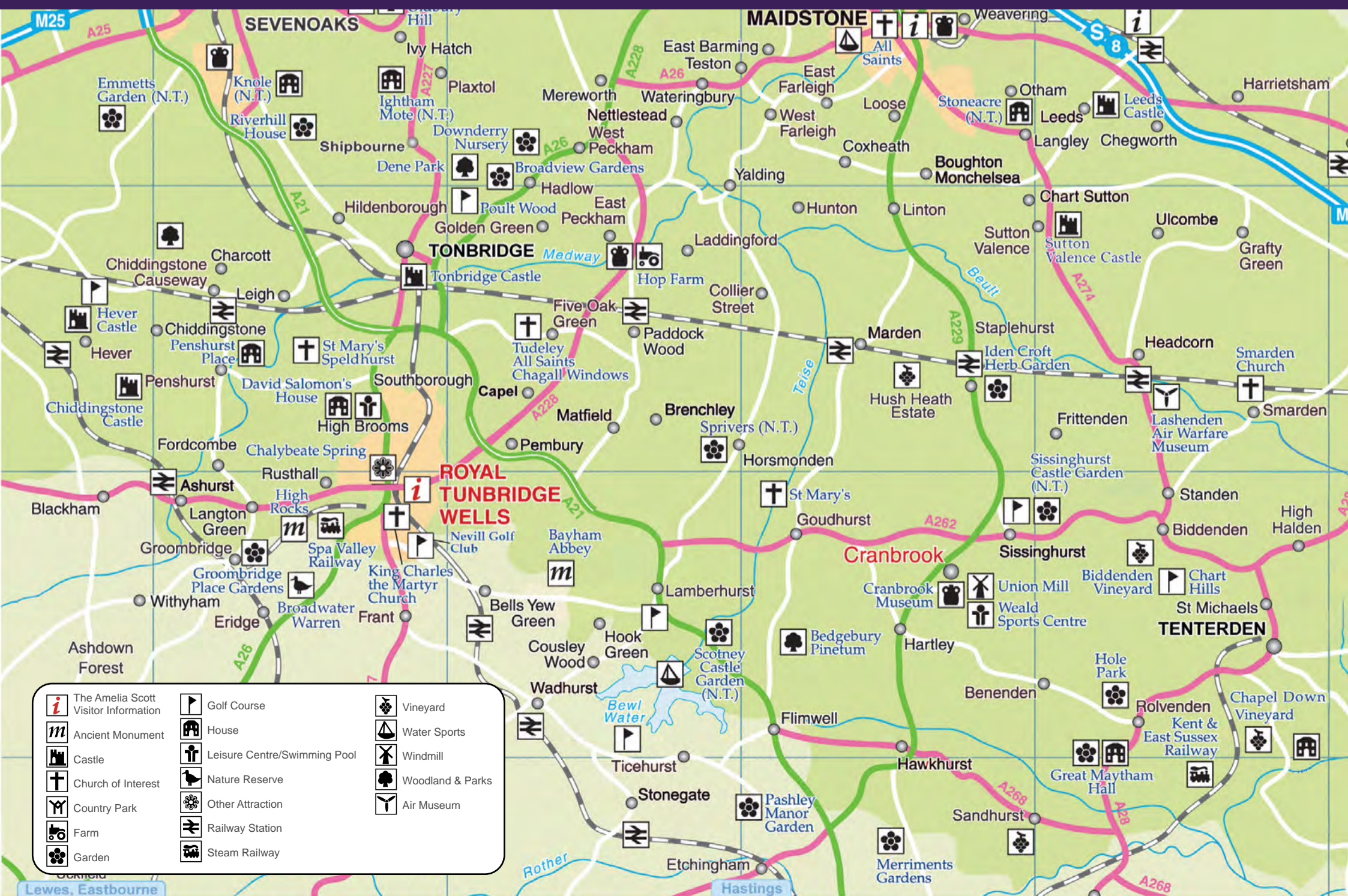
Walks | Historic Houses | Gardens  
Boutique Shopping | Restaurants



Photography: Chris Parker, Mike Bartlett, David Hodgkinson, David Staines, Darryl Curcher, Peter Smith Jigsaw and Explore Kent

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- |                                      |                              |                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| The Amelia Scott Visitor Information | Golf Course                  | Vineyard         |
| Ancient Monument                     | House                        | Water Sports     |
| Castle                               | Leisure Centre/Swimming Pool | Windmill         |
| Church of Interest                   | Nature Reserve               | Woodland & Parks |
| Country Park                         | Other Attraction             | Air Museum       |
| Farm                                 | Railway Station              |                  |
| Garden                               | Steam Railway                |                  |

# Town & country at its best

## The town

Royal Tunbridge Wells lies at the heart of the unspoilt beauty of the Weald of Kent.

Retaining much of the charm of its Georgian heyday – Royal Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding area remains a favoured destination for those who want to enjoy elegant surroundings and easy access to the countryside within an hour's drive or train ride from the hustle and bustle of London.



The Chalybeate Spring

**The Pantiles**, the famous white colonnaded walkway, once the central meeting place for visiting gentry, is the historic heart of Royal Tunbridge Wells and today is buzzing with shops and cafés. This is also the site of the original **Chalybeate Spring**, discovered in 1606. Its reputation for health giving properties was the reason for the growth of the town as a fashionable place to visit and be

seen. The town's historic past is very much reflected in its architecture – from Regency villas and large Victorian houses, many designed by Decimus Burton, to pretty clapboard cottages. Evidence of these can be found in the 'village' area situated behind the old High Street, in Mount Ephraim and in Calverley Park and Calverley Park Crescent.

At the centre of the town **The Common** has been a place of diversion for residents and visitors alike for several hundred years. Its large open green spaces have unusually survived the test of time and nowadays it is a lovely place to walk and for children to play, especially on the popular and unusual outcrop of sandstone rock, known locally as **Wellington Rocks**.

## The Amelia Scott

Where Art and Culture meet to bring people together through exhibitions, our public library and visitor information. The newly restored building is named after the suffragist and Tunbridge Wells resident Amelia Scott. Discover her story and The Story of the Wells. Visit [theamelia.co.uk](http://theamelia.co.uk) for more information on news and events.



The Amelia Scott

## Heritage Walking Trail

The **Heritage Walking Trail** links together a series of special plaques commemorating famous residents and visitors to Royal Tunbridge Wells over the past four centuries. It is a wonderful way of discovering more about the historic buildings and streets of the town and its famous visitors, such as Princess (later Queen) Victoria, William Makepeace Thackeray and EM Forster. Copies of the Trail are available online and from the Amelia Scott.

Or why not download your own tour guide with the **audio walking app** 'Tales of Tunbridge Wells'? 'The Town' is a self-led tour of Royal Tunbridge Wells during which you will discover the history and heritage of the celebrated Royal town. The narrative spans the discovery of the Chalybeate Spring in 1606 to the thriving Spa town that exists today. The walk is a pleasant 90 minute journey through 30 key locations in the heart of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Listen as local historians, business owners, residents, landlords and even a reverend share their anecdotes and facts as they unveil the secrets and rich history hiding within the elegant Georgian and Victorian buildings which characterise this popular tourist destination.



More information at [visittunbridgewells.com/tour-of-the-town-app](http://visittunbridgewells.com/tour-of-the-town-app). Use this QR Code to download it now!

## Shopping

Royal Tunbridge Wells offers one of the most unique shopping experiences in south east England with its unrivalled combination of small specialist shops, designer boutiques and big high street names.

**The Pantiles** is home to a variety of delightful shops, galleries and lovely cafés. Many of the shops in **Chapel Place** and in the old **High Street** still retain their original Victorian frontages and now sell designer clothing, home furnishings, gifts and jewellery.

**Mount Pleasant** leads into the 'modern' part of the town and to **Calverley Road**, a busy, partly pedestrianised area which has various major high street names to hand. The main entrance to **Royal Victoria Place** shopping centre is also found here.



Cranbrook

## Food & drink

The Tunbridge Wells region has developed a reputation as one of the best places to find good food and drink in the south east. The town and its surrounding area boasts a wide range of excellent traditional English pubs, brasseries and fine restaurants, serving local produce. Visitors can also find local produce to buy at the markets.

## Events & entertainment

**The Assembly Hall Theatre, Trinity Theatre and The Forum** in Royal Tunbridge Wells offer a wide range of entertainment from opera and ballet to comedy, music and drama, and alongside these are many smaller venues. There are a number of annual music events such as Jazz on the Pantiles, Black Deer Festival and Pub in the Park alongside lively local gigs.



Assembly Hall Theatre

## Around Royal Tunbridge Wells

Royal Tunbridge Wells lies in the unspoilt beauty of the Weald, designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The landscape is a patchwork of rolling hills, ancient woods and open heaths, home to hop gardens, orchards and vineyards, covering this part of the Garden of England in beautiful blossom in spring, cool verdure in summer and vibrant colours in autumn.



Pembury Circular Walk

The many small towns and villages still retain the true flavour of the English countryside – take time to visit **Goudhurst, Lamberhurst, Matfield, Brechley, Hawkhurst and Benenden**. **Cranbrook**, known as the Capital of the Weald, was once the bustling centre of the region's medieval cloth industry. Today the original, and still working, **Union Mill** stands as testament to this important part of the region's past as it overlooks this pretty country town. The **Cranbrook Museum** nearby reveals more about the area's history, trade and industry.

## Castles & historic houses

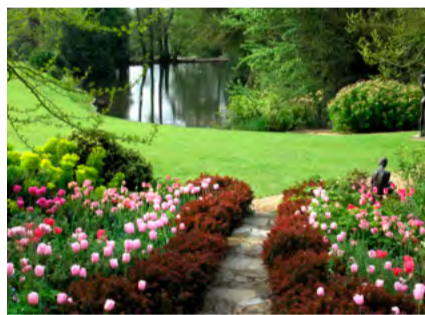
There are more castles, historic houses and gardens concentrated in this area than any other in England, making Tunbridge Wells the perfect base for a short break for history and garden lovers alike, as well as for those who just want to relax and unwind.

**Penshurst Place**, home of the Sidney family for 450 years; **Hever Castle**, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, second wife of King Henry VIII; and **Leeds Castle**, known as 'the loveliest castle in the world', are all splendid examples of fine historical buildings set in spectacular grounds and gardens and within easy reach of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The fairytale castles at **Bodiam** and **Tonbridge**, both strongholds against invading armies, still stand guard over the River Rother and the River Medway.

**Chartwell**, once the country home of Sir Winston Churchill; **Knole**, the largest private house in England and **Ightham Mote**, an enchanting 650 year old moated manor house, are now all owned by the National Trust and full of fascinating historical treasures. **Chiddingstone Castle** contains the intriguing antique collections of its last private owner.

## Gardens

Discover how the area lives up to its reputation as the Garden of England. It not only has more than its fair share of the country's top gardens, but also has many which have remained more of a secret.



Pashley Manor Gardens

## Sissinghurst Castle Garden and Scotney Castle Garden

(surely one of the most romantic gardens in the world), both provide a profusion of colour in the spring, summer and autumn months.

**Groombridge Place Gardens** has much to offer from award winning formal terraced gardens and topiary to the fantasy wilderness of the Enchanted Forest.

**Hole Park Garden and Merriments** are just two of the 'secret' gardens tucked away in the beautiful countryside, both peaceful and colourful.

**Pashley Manor Gardens**, with its display of over 30,000 tulips, combines the colour and tranquillity of the garden with the beauty of modern sculpture and art.

The world-renowned gardens at **Great Dixter, Sheffield Park** and **Wakehurst Place** are also within easy driving distance of Royal Tunbridge Wells.



## More places to visit

The reservoir at **Bewl Water Country Park** is the largest area of inland water in the South East, with 21 km of shoreline, and **Ashdown Forest**, the setting and inspiration for AA Milne's Winnie the Pooh books, both are perfect for walking and exploring.

For a fun-filled day out for the family, why not hop on the **Spa Valley Railway** and travel by steam train between Royal Tunbridge Wells and Eridge, stopping at High Rocks and Groombridge on the way.

**Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest** offers off-road cycling and bridle tracks, as well as a network of scenic walking routes, an imaginative adventure play area, and Go Ape, a tree top adventure course, all set amongst 2,000 acres of forest.

The striking remains of **Bayham Abbey**, dating from 1208, stand in a beautifully peaceful setting alongside the River Teise next to a Georgian gothic house.

## Churches

The area is dotted with many intriguing and unusual churches: **King Charles the Martyr Church** in Chapel Place in Royal Tunbridge Wells; **St Dunstan's** in Cranbrook, known locally as the 'Cathedral of the Weald'; **St Mary's** at Speldhurst with stunning stained glass windows by William Morris and Sir Edward Burne Jones; and **All Saints' Church** in Tudeley with magnificent windows designed by Marc Chagall, are just four examples well worth a visit.



Bayham Abbey

## Golf

There are three courses in the area. The 18-hole **Nevill Golf Club** welcomes visitors and is within 10 minutes' drive of Royal Tunbridge Wells. In the picturesque village of **Lamberhurst** visitors are welcomed at the 18-hole parkland golf course that straddles the River Teise. There are also 18 and 9 hole courses at **Hever Castle**.



Walking at Sissinghurst

## Walking

The area around Royal Tunbridge Wells has an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways. Long distance routes include the **Tunbridge Wells Circular**, the **Weald Way**, the **North Downs Way**, the **Pilgrims Way** and the **Sussex Border Path**. There are many delightful shorter walks in the woodlands and country parks that are scattered around the area.

## Cycling

From strenuous mountain biking to family friendly routes, Tunbridge Wells offers a wealth of natural beauty to enhance any bike ride. **Bedgebury National Pinetum & Forest** has tracks for family rides and mountain biking enthusiasts of all ages and abilities. **Bewl Water Country Park** provides another great background for mountain biking around the lake shore. Details of other National Cycle Routes through the Wealden countryside can be found at [explorekent.org](http://explorekent.org)



Cycling at Bedgebury

## For further information

The Amelia Scott, Mount Pleasant Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1JN. (Open from April 2022)

**Telephone:** +44 (0)1892 526121

**E-mail:** [info@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:info@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

**Website:** [visittunbridgewells.com](http://visittunbridgewells.com)

[@Officialvisittunbridgewells](https://www.instagram.com/officialvisittunbridgewells) [@VisitTunbridgeWells](https://www.facebook.com/visittunbridgewells)

**Accessibility** Visit [accessible.co.uk](http://accessible.co.uk). The Amelia is designed for everyone. There is step free access, lifts and disabled toilets available.

## How to get here

Royal Tunbridge Wells is 20 minutes' drive from the M25 and M20 motorways, can be reached in less than an hour from the Channel Tunnel terminal at Folkestone and in just over one hour from the ports at Dover. Gatwick airport is 40 minutes and Heathrow one hour away by car.

Less than one hour from London Charing Cross, Gatwick Airport and Ashford International. Regular direct services operate to and from London and from Hastings. For further details visit [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk).